

Applicants hereby affirm that a careful and thorough search of the prior art has been performed. The references identified in this search are deemed to be the prior art most closely related to the subject matter encompassed by the claims of the above-referenced patent application. This prior art has been made of record by the filing of an Information Disclosure Statement on August 13, 2002, and the filing of a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement on December 11, 2002. Accordingly, a copy of each of these references has already been provided to the United States Patent and Trademark Office. Therefore, no prior art references are required in conjunction with this Petition.

Applicants hereby authorize the Commissioner to charge the appropriate fee for a Petition to Make Special in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(h) in the amount of \$130 to Deposit Account No. 50-1710. Should the Commissioner determine that an additional fee is due, he is hereby authorized to charge said fee to Deposit Account No. 50-1710.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully requested that examination of the above-referenced application be advanced in accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.102 and MPEP 708.02.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 625-3500. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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James A. Gromada
Gilberto M. Villacorta, Ph. D.
Registration No. 34,038
James A. Gromada
Registration No. 44,727

Patent Administrator
KATTEN MUCHIN ZAVIS ROSENMAN
525 West Monroe Street, Suite 1600
Chicago, Illinois 60661-3693
Facsimile: (312) 902-1061